

Contact our HS2 Helpdesk team on **08081 434 434**

# HS2 Update

Northolt Tunnel | September 2025

High Speed Two (HS2) is the new high-speed railway for Britain. Skanska Costain STRABAG (SCSJV) is the main works contractor building the London tunnels between West Ruislip and Euston including the twin-bore Northolt Tunnel. The tunnel has been built using four tunnel boring machines (TBMs) in two phases, known as 'Northolt Tunnel West' and 'Northolt Tunnel East'.

## Northolt Tunnel update

Our four Northolt Tunnel Boring Machines (TBMs) have completed their tunnelling journeys at Green Park Way vent shaft in Greenford. We removed our final TBM, Anne, in August 2025.

We are building our final cross passage in Greenford which will be completed by early October. Cross Passages are located about every 500 metres on the tunnels route and allow HS2 passengers to get a place of safety in an emergency.

We will continue works in Old Oak Common to build the sprayed concrete lining tunnels between Victoria Road Crossover Box and Old Oak Common Station. Updates can be found at [hs2.org.uk/work-items/old-oak-common-tunnel](https://hs2.org.uk/work-items/old-oak-common-tunnel).

We are removing the structures and equipment needed to support the Northolt Tunnel West tunnelling works at the West Ruislip Portal in Hillingdon.

This is the final edition of our Northolt Tunnel Newsletter. To keep you informed about works along this route, we will continue to provide updates at [HS2.org.uk/in-your-area](https://HS2.org.uk/in-your-area).



## Engagement Events

Our engagement team regularly hold events to provide information and answer any questions you have about the tunnels. Our upcoming online events are:

- Virtual drop in – Tunnelling works - Every third Tuesday of the month
- Virtual drop in – West Ruislip demobilisation works – Every third Monday of the month

For more details visit [HS2.org.uk/events](https://HS2.org.uk/events) or scan the QR code below with your smart phone camera



## All four Northolt Tunnel TBMs lifted out of the ground

In August 2025 we achieved another milestone with the successful removal of TBM Anne at the Green Park Way vent shaft site.

Anne is the last of the four TBMs that have collectively excavated the 8.4 Mile (13.5km) long Northolt Tunnel. The tunnel will carry HS2's high-speed trains from West Ruislip to the new Old Oak Common station in North Acton.

Anne was named after Lady Anne Byron, an educational reformer and philanthropist who founded the Ealing Grove School in 1834—England's first co-operative school, which provided education for working-class children in west London.

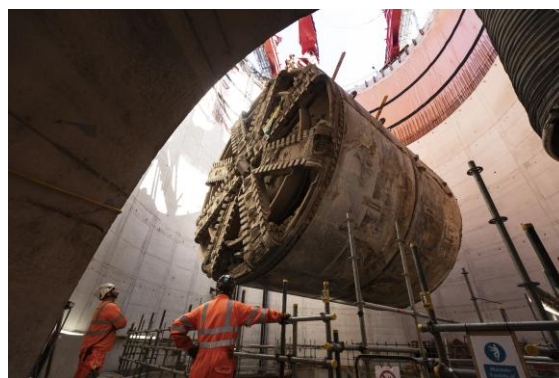
The TBM weighed a total of 1,700 tonnes and stretched around 150 metres. We lifted the huge machine out of the shaft in sections using a giant gantry crane.

The removal of Anne closely followed the removal of TBM Emily in July.

Once we have fully disassembled Emily and Anne, we will share the materials to be reused in other projects across the country.

The London Clay removed by the machines will be repurposed to fill in old quarries for a nature reserve in Cambridge and for a housing development in Rugby. The clay will also be used to create a wetland habitat for wildlife as part of the wider Cliffe Pools reserve in Kent.

Together with our other two TBMs, Sushila and Caroline, our TBMs have excavated more than four million tonnes of London clay and installed nearly 100,000 concrete segments to construct the tunnel walls.



TBM Anne lifted from Green Park Way vent shaft site

## A local connection to TBM Emily

Our Green Park Way team hosted a visit for a relative of Emily Sophia Taylor, who TBM Emily is named after.

Our Engagement Team were contacted by the local Ealing resident after she realised the TBM is named after their great-Aunt, Emily Sophia Taylor, who helped establish the Perivale Maternity Hospital in 1937 before becoming Ealing's first female mayor in 1938.

The resident had previously visited our Victoria Road Crossover Box site when we launched Emily, and they were eager to visit once the TBM had finished her journey. The resident was fascinated by the scale of the whole operation and impressed by the size of the TBM cutterhead, shield and lifting equipment.



A photo of TBM Emily's namesake, Emily Sophia Taylor. With thanks to Around Ealing magazine and Ealing Libraries.

## Current and upcoming work



A completed cross passage in Northolt Tunnel

### Cross Passages

We are building the final cross passage about 30 metres below ground at Rockware Avenue in Greenford. This work is due to be complete by early October.

Once this final passage is complete, we will have successfully built 34 cross passages along the Northolt Tunnel route.

The cross passages provide a horizontal connection between the tunnels and will give HS2 passengers a safe evacuation path in case of an emergency. These passages are spaced approximately every 500 metres along the route.

### Northolt Tunnel facts and figures

- Tunnel length: 8.4 miles (13.5km)
- Tunnel depth: 35m at its deepest
- Tunnel diameter: 8.10m in the east and 8.80m in the west
- Number of cross passages: 34
- Number of ventilation shafts: 5
- Tunnelling construction: 94,233 segments
- Tunnelling excavation: 4,160,000 tonnes (2.7 million m<sup>3</sup>) of London Clay

### Connecting the Northolt Tunnel to the ventilation shafts

We are continuing to connect the tunnel to the main shaft at South Ruislip Vent Shaft about 25 metres below ground. We are removing tunnel lining segments from the upper part of the tunnel and breaking out the concrete between the tunnel and the bottom of the shaft. We will then remove the broken concrete through the tunnel. Once these works are complete, we will start works to connect the tunnel to the main shaft at the Mandeville Road Vent shaft site.

### Walkways construction

We are building emergency walkways inside the Northolt twin-bore tunnel towards the West Ruislip Portal. These walkways will allow passengers to safely evacuate a train and walk to the nearest cross passage and rescue train should there be an emergency. We will also build a narrower walkway that will be used for maintenance access in the tunnel.

We will build these walkways by placing concrete in a temporary bridge structure to shape and support the concrete until it hardens.



Northolt Tunnel bored by TBM Sushila



## In other news

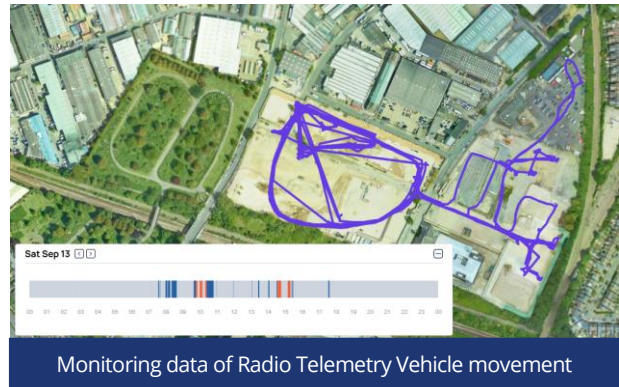
### Improving air quality at our sites

We have introduced a new monitoring system to help reduce emissions produced from equipment across our sites. This innovative technology, called Project Ignition, tracks individual construction vehicles in real time, showing us when engines are left running while a vehicle is stationary. This is referred to as idling.

By identifying and addressing idling at the source, we can reduce unnecessary emissions and improve air quality.

For example, this image shows the movement of a Radio Telemetry Vehicle (RTV) over one shift at our Victoria Road Crossover Box and Flat Iron sites. We use this data to provide real-time feedback to drivers, improving their habits and reducing the amount of time spent idling.

We are committed to reducing air pollution to protect both the local community and the environment. Through initiatives like Project Ignition, we are taking proactive steps towards cleaner and greener construction practices.



### Vegetation clearance at Perivale Wood

Staff across our project have been volunteering their time to help maintain the woodland at Perivale Wood.

Perivale Wood is an ancient woodland that has existed as woodland since at least 1600 AD. The woodland has evidence of human activity dating back 6,000 years, with the earliest written record of it being in 1227. Perivale Wood is managed by the Selborne Society and is known for its ancient oak trees and a rich variety of plant and animal species.

Our main task is eliminating holly from the Ancient Woodland. Holly is a species not native to Perivale Wood which spreads rapidly and uncontrollably, obstructing sunlight and hindering the local biodiversity by preventing native plants from prospering.

Other tasks include clearing vegetation, planting and maintaining the woodland, ensuring a safe and enjoyable environment for visitors and local wildlife.



HS2 staff clearing vegetation from Perivale Wood

## What else is happening in your area?

[www.hs2.org.uk](http://www.hs2.org.uk)

### Contact our HS2 Helpdesk team

Our team is here to listen and respond to your enquiry, complaint or feedback to help us be a good neighbour.

You can contact our Helpdesk team all day, every day of the year on:

Freephone: **08081 434 434**

Minicom: **08081 456 472**

Email: [hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk](mailto:hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk)

### Keep up-to-date with your local community

To find out more about what's happening in your area and receive regular email updates, you can sign up to our local community websites at: [www.hs2inyourarea.co.uk](http://www.hs2inyourarea.co.uk).

### About our Community and Business Funds

We are offering two funds that are available to local communities and businesses between the West Midlands and London, to help with the disruption caused by our construction work. These are the Community and Environment Fund (CEF) and the Business and Local Economy Fund (BLEF).

The CEF is designed to give communities the opportunity to share in the benefits of HS2. It is an allocated fund that communities are able to apply for, to help to support local projects that aim to improve their local area.

The BLEF is designed to support local economies that may be disrupted by the construction of HS2. BLEF grants are for local business support organisations and local authorities to help maintain business activity in local communities.

For more information about each of these funds, including how to apply, please visit: <https://www.groundwork.org.uk/hs2funds>



# Keeping you informed

We are committed to keeping you informed about work on HS2. This includes making sure you know what to expect and when to expect it, as well as how we can help.

## Residents' and Construction Commissioner

The independent Residents' and Construction Commissioner oversees and monitors our **community engagement strategy**, making sure we fulfil our commitments to you.

The commissioner monitors the way we manage and respond to complaints about construction and advises members of the public how to make complaints.

The commissioner helps settle disputes involving individuals and organisations that we can't resolve.

You can find the commissioner's report and our responses at:  
[www.gov.uk/government/collections/independent-hs2-commissioner](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/independent-hs2-commissioner)

The commissioner can be contacted on:  
[hs2commissioner@dft.gov.uk](mailto:hs2commissioner@dft.gov.uk)

## Property and compensation

You can find out all about HS2 and properties along the route by visiting:  
[www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-property](http://www.gov.uk/government/collections/hs2-property)

Find out if you're eligible for compensation at:  
[www.gov.uk/claim-compensation-if-affected-by-hs2](http://www.gov.uk/claim-compensation-if-affected-by-hs2)

## Holding us to account


If you are unhappy for any reason, you can make a complaint by contacting our HS2 Helpdesk team.

For more details on our complaints process, please visit our website:  
[www.hs2.org.uk/contact-us/how-to-complain](http://www.hs2.org.uk/contact-us/how-to-complain)

## Contact us

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 Freephone **08081 434 434**

 Minicom **08081 456 472**

 Email [hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk](mailto:hs2enquiries@hs2.org.uk)

Write to:

**FREEPOST**  
**HS2 Community Engagement**

Website [www.hs2.org.uk](http://www.hs2.org.uk)

To keep up to date with what is happening in your area, visit:

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